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OTTERBURN.

THE battle of Otterburn was one of the most famous contests recorded in the annals of chivalry. It was not a national contest in the sense in which Bannockburn is, although it occurred in the course of an invasion of England by the Scots. The fate of nations did not hang upon the issue. It was in reality a personal fight, in which the rivalries of two powerful Border chiefs were put to the arbitrament of the sword. Each of these chieftains was a sort of king in his own country—the Percy in Northumberland, the Douglas in Teviotdale; and the fight that ensued was perhaps all the more bitter and bloody for this element of personal rivalry and clan hatred that entered into it.

It is not, however, to the strict records of the historian that the name of Otterburn owes its popularity. This has been the work of the old ballad-writers—the nameless bards and musicians of a far past who ‘sung other names, but left their own unsung.’ The older and the later ballads of ‘Chevy Chase,’ as well as the English and the Scottish ballads on ‘The Battle of Otterbourne,’ point evidently to the same contest. The outstanding feature in all these is, that a Percy and a Douglas had a great fight, the inevitable horrors of which were tempered by the fine spirit of chivalry that animated both the principals in the fight and their followers, and the result of which battle was that the Douglas lost his life and the Percy was ‘led captive away.’ The older ballad of ‘Chevy Chase,’ which probably belongs to the fifteenth century, was perhaps that of which Sir Philip Sydney was thinking when he said: ‘I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet.’ Even the learned Ben Jonson declared that he had rather have been the author of ‘Chevy Chase’ than of all his own works. So true is it that song is more powerful than science; that that which touches the heart and stirs the imagination, even though it be but a simple lilt of verse, is more enduring than the

ponderous tomes that speak only to the intellect.

Yet this popular appreciation of the ballads in which the prowess of the Douglas and Percy is embalmed has not been without its drawbacks, for it has led to a great misunderstanding of the leading events of which the battle formed but an episode—though indeed the chief episode. If you were to question people on the subject of the battle and its origin, probably nine persons out of ten would answer that the fight was the result of an attempt on the part of the one chieftain to hunt upon the lands of the other—a kind of poaching raid on a great scale checked by an opposing army of game preservers. All the ballads, whether they are written from the Scottish or the English point of view, agree in this. The older ballad of ‘Chevy Chase’ has it:

The Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he,
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three,
In the maugh of doughty Douglas,
And all that ever with him be.

The later version, also, in relating the ‘woeful hunting’ that once did ‘in Chevy Chase befall,’ says:

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took his way.

Both the English and the Scottish versions of ‘The Ballad of Otterbourne,’ while agreeing that it was a hunting expedition, differ, however, from the ‘Chevy Chase’ ballads in so far as they represent Douglas and not Percy to have been the intruder.

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas bown'd him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey.

All these ballads so agreeing as to the conflict having arisen out of a hunting raid, not anything that may be written by the historian to an opposite effect will ever succeed in eradicating the popular mistake.

The scene of the battle itself is not, we should think, a frequent place of pilgrimage, as it is not conveniently accessible. It lies far away among the high and solitary moors of Northumberland, where they stretch, brown and naked, southwards from the crest of the Cheviots. Bellingham Station, on the North Tyne Railway, is perhaps the best starting-point for the pedestrian, and he has a walk northward of from eight to ten miles, over a weary tract of moorland, before he reaches the little village that bears the famous name of Otterburn. All this district of Northumberland lies at a high level above the sea, and as the soil is wet and sour no trees grow upon it; hence the landscape has a dreary and uninviting aspect, especially to one who has just quitted the beautifully wooded vale of North Tyne, with its rich green slopes and its crystal winding river.

The little village of Otterburn lies in Redesdale, and receives its name from the brook that here comes down from the hills, and falls into the Rede Water. Near to it is the ancient Roman road known as Watling Street, which runs up Redesdale for some miles, then crosses the Cheviots, and descends into Scotland, being traceable still for most of the way until near Melrose. The fact of the vicinity of the field of Otterburn to this old Roman Road accounts no doubt for this being the scene of the battle, as this road afforded the Scots an excellent means of returning—as we shall find they were returning—into Scotland.

The battle was brought about in this way. During the reign of Edward III. and that of his successor Richard II., Scotland had been grievously harassed by the English. Time and again had the Southron forces marched across the Borders, burning and slaying and laying waste wherever they went. The Scots, so harassed, were fain to make friends with France, which country was also much pressed by the English. In 1385, the king of France sent one of his generals to Scotland with a thousand men-at-arms, knights, and esquires, to assist the Scots against England; but with them also he sent what was still more acceptable to the Scots, poor as they had been now rendered by the constant harryings of the English—namely, the sum of fifty thousand livres, and no fewer than twelve hundred stands of complete mail. No doubt at the battle of Otterburn many a French helm and hauberk had its metal tested under English lance and axe. But the French men-at-arms themselves proved rather a trouble to the Scots, and nothing was effected by their help against England.

But in 1388, the year in which Otterburn was fought, the Scots roused themselves for a war of reprisal against their Southron enemies. The English government under Richard II. was weak and divided, even the noblemen on the English Border being at enmity among themselves. This, in the opinion of the Scottish barons, afforded a favourable opportunity to strike their long-meditated blow. All the arrangements for the invasion were made with as much privacy as possible, so that the English might be taken unawares; and on St Oswald's day, 5th August, the Scottish forces met near Jedburgh to the number of forty thousand men. But secret as their proceedings had been, the rumour of

them had reached the Earl of Northumberland. Hence, when the Scots met in council of war in the church of Southdean, at the foot of the Cheviots, an English squire, in the dress and arms of a Scotsman, entered among them, as if he had been in the retinue of one of the Scottish nobles, and so listened to all their deliberations. But when he retired from the church, he found that his horse, which he had fastened up with the others, had been stolen. Not wishing to attract attention to himself, he proceeded to walk quietly away. But two sharp-eyed Scottish knights saw him thus walking off, booted and spurred.

'I have witnessed many wonderful things,' said one to the other, 'but what I now see is equal to any. That man yonder has, I believe, lost his horse, and yet he makes no inquiry about it. On my troth, I doubt much if he belongs to us; let us go after him and ascertain.'

When they came up to and questioned him, he prevaricated and contradicted himself; upon which they seized and carried him before the council. There, under threats of immediate execution, he confessed his espionage, and revealed the English plans. These were, to wait until it was seen whether the Scots should enter England on the eastern or the western frontier; and when the event had decided which, the English were to advance into Scotland on the opposite side, and so harry the country in their absence. In consequence of this information, the Scots leaders resolved to divide their army into two divisions, sending the main body into England by Carlisle, and the second by way of Northumberland. The latter division consisted of about four hundred mounted men-at-arms, with two thousand infantry, and was placed under the command of James Earl of Douglas. Southdean was but a few miles from the head of Rede Water, over the Cheviots; and down this valley the Douglas soon led his men into the heart of Northumberland.

The English spy having been sent a prisoner to Berwick, the first news the Northumbrians had of the Scotch invasion was in the clouds of smoke which ascended wherever they passed. The Scots spoiled and burned as they went along. And so rapid was their march, that they had entered the rich county of Durham, penetrated to the gates of Durham itself, burning and killing and gathering booty everywhere, had returned and recrossed the Tyne, and were before the walls of Newcastle by Friday the 14th of August, within eight days from the time they started. To account for the rapidity of these movements, it must be borne in mind, that although only the men-at-arms fought on horseback, the infantry when on the march were also on horseback. They rode on small horses, and could act on occasion as light cavalry; but on the eve of a battle, their horses or ponies were dismissed in the charge of attendants, and their riders fought on foot. And Froissart tells us that on this occasion the two thousand infantry were, on the march, all mounted.

It was here, then, before the gates of Newcastle, that the series of chivalrous exploits began which ended in the fierce conflict of Otterburn. The Earl of Northumberland had himself remained at his castle of Alnwick, but sent his two sons, Sir Henry Percy ('Hotspur') and Sir Ralph to defend Newcastle. Here between the

Friday and the following Monday, the Scots had made various attempts upon the town, and, as was the habit of the times, many a fight took place before the barriers. But it was on Monday, the 17th, the great event happened; for on that day the Douglas and the Percy met in personal conflict, when the latter was unhorsed, and his lance, with the pennon thereto attached, taken by Douglas. Hotspur was only twenty-three years of age, while Douglas was about thirty-eight; both experience and strength may therefore be said to have been on the side of the Douglas. Nevertheless, the loss of his pennon was a galling affront to Percy and the English, while its capture was none the less a matter of rejoicing to Earl Douglas and the Scots.

The Earl, as he bore away his prize, exclaimed: 'I will carry this token of your prowess with me to Scotland, and plant it on the tower of my castle at Dalkeith, that it may be seen afar.'

'By God,' replied Hotspur, 'you shall not even bear it out of Northumberland. Be assured you shall never have that pennon to brag of.'

Douglas answered: 'You must come this night and seek it, then. I will fix your pennon before my tent, and shall see if you will venture to take it away.'

Accordingly, Douglas planted the spear with the pennon at the door of his pavilion, and appointed a strong guard, as he fully expected a night attack. And so there would have been had the heady Hotspur had his own way. But the English leaders dissuaded him. They did not know where the rest of the Scottish army was, and might be led into an ambush.

The night having thus passed without battle, Douglas began his return into Scotland. He had a rich booty with him, and every hour's delay would strengthen the enemy, who were gathering assistance from every quarter. By four o'clock on the morning of the 18th, he was at Ponteland, eight miles from Newcastle, and there he tarried for a few hours till the town was taken and its owner made prisoner. Then the Scots once more began their march towards the Cheviots, and in the afternoon were before the tower of Otterburn, fully thirty miles from Newcastle. They attacked this tower also, but did not succeed in taking it; and when evening approached the Scots took measures to intrench themselves for the night. With this view Douglas selected a strong situation on a spur of hill about a mile in advance.

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Among the bent syc brown.

Here he probably found the remains of a round hill-fort, and within this he made all secure for the night. The ground in front of him, and which formed the site of the battle, was an easy slope descending towards Otterburn and the Rede Water, with marshy land on both sides; and, though the slope is now bare and treeless, it was then protected in many parts by trees and brushwood. As Percy describes it in the ballad:

The roe full reckless there she rins,
To make the game and glee;
The falcon and the pheasant both,
Among the holts on hie.

This action of Douglas, of intrenching himself above Otterburn, was against the better judgment of the barons and knights in his train. They would have preferred to make good their return into Scotland, of which they were within a few hours' march. But Douglas's chivalrous instincts as a knight were, like those of James the Fourth, too strong for his prudence as a leader. He had promised to give the Percy an opportunity of winning back his pennon, and here at Otterburn should he wait for him.

'Thither will I come,' proud Percy said,
'By the might of Our Ladye!—
'There will I bide thee,' said the Douglas,
'My troth I plight to thee.'

Next morning, a portion of the Scottish army renewed their attack on Otterburn tower, but the place was strong and well defended, and withstood the assault successfully. At night, once more, the Scots withdrew to the shelter of their camp. It was the evening of Wednesday the 19th of August. The sun had not yet sunk in the western sky, when low down on the eastern horizon rose the red moon, now at the full, all night long to shed its dim rays upon as stern and deadly a conflict as ever broke the stillness of night. The chiefs, wearied with the day's fruitless assault, had relieved themselves of their heavy armour, and were sitting at supper in their 'side gowns,' when the cry broke that the Percy was upon them. And so it was. Had the English attack been directed against the pavilions where the knights were, the discomfiture of the Scots had been inevitable; but it so happened that the portion of the camp which they surprised on the east side was that occupied by the sutlers and camp-followers. Bands of infantry were at once despatched to maintain the fight until the knights and men-at-arms had time to don their armour; and so hastily and imperfectly was this done, that Douglas went forth to the battle without his helmet, and many other lords and knights were equally unprepared.

The English, like the Scots, fought this battle on foot. The dim light and the nature of the ground did not admit of the movements of cavalry. Percy was at the head of eight or nine thousand men, thus greatly outnumbering the Scots; but Douglas, when he issued from his tent, led his knights round the back of the camp, and assailed the English in flank. The fight was long and stubborn, and at first the English were like to have the victory. But about midnight, heavy clouds began to roll across the sky, shutting out the light of the moon; and the wearied combatants withdrew their forces for a time, glad, no doubt, of a brief breathing-space. When once more moonlight was shed upon the scene, the fight was resumed. Seeing the English massed strongly at one point, and anxious to recover the spirits of his men, Douglas seized a huge battle-axe, which few but he could wield, and followed only by his armed chaplain and his son bearing his banner, he rushed into the midst of the enemy, shouting his war-cry of 'A Douglas! a Douglas!' The English ranks opened before his terrific onslaught, his hand dealing death wherever it fell; but he went too far, and was hopelessly involved in the press, and could not return. Borne down by spears on every side, at last he

fell mortally wounded, while his chaplain stood over him to protect his body. The Scottish knights rushed in to his assistance, and the English were driven back. The Douglas prayed his companions to hide his fall from his followers, and to raise his standard once more as if he were at their head. This was done; and the Scots, shouting his war-cry, made so terrible an assault upon the English, that the latter were broken up and began to quit the field. In the press, both the Percy and his brother were surrounded and taken prisoners, while the Scots chased the English with great slaughter long five miles from the field.

The Scottish ballad gives a touching picture of the dying Douglas. Addressing his nephew, he says :

My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three:
And bury me by the bracken bush
That grows on yonder lily lee.'

They buried him not there, however; but bore his remains home with them to the Abbey Church of Melrose.

And there the dying lamps did burn,
Before thy low and lonely urn,
O gallant chief of Otterbourne!

His son, Archibald Douglas of Cavers, who bore his standard, carried it home with him, where in Cavers house it is still preserved, along with two ladies' gauntlets, beautifully embroidered with pearls, known as 'The Percy Relics.' These latter were probably attached to the spear which the Douglas took from Percy under the walls of Newcastle.

J. R.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXI.—'LOVE THE GIFT IS LOVE THE DEBT.'

WHEN she and her luggage were safely bestowed in the dogcart, when she had been well wrapped in rugs, and when they had dashed out of the station into the raw darkness, then Isabel thanked George for coming for her.

'Nobody knows I've come,' said George. 'We waited all day yesterday for you, and were just beginning to think you were not coming at all, when in came your telegram.'

'But that made it all right—did it not?' said she.

'Well,' said George, with a joyous laugh, 'nearly right. But you didn't set down what line you were coming by: there are three lines, and each has a night-train.'

'How foolish of me!' she exclaimed. 'And you have been waiting about for three trains!' She considered him a moment, as if she found him a more eager lover than she had bargained for. 'I found,' said she, by way of apology, 'that I had a good many things to do yesterday, and I thought I would take the night-train for the sake of having a new experience.'

'So like you, Bell,' laughed George, 'to want a new experience!'

'Is it?' said she simply. 'I suppose it is. When they were well out on the clear high-

way, and one hand was enough to hold the reins, he put down his other hand to seek hers; but she affected not to understand his purpose, and let her hands remain hid. The mare knew that she was going home to a bran-mash, and she spanked along at such a rate that speech was impracticable; so the two sat silent, and wrapped against the cold air; and mound and tree, cottage and bush, fled fast away from them, looking merely like blacker features and articulations of the general darkness.

None of the household—save a groom to take charge of the mare—was astir when they arrived. Isabel retired at once to freshen herself with a bath and to change her dress. She did not come down till the breakfast bell rang; and then, when she had made her apologies and explanations, there were presented to her a great surprise and determining shock.

They sat at breakfast, when Mr Suffield, who had been running his eye up and down the columns of *The Lancashire Gazette*, murmuring the while 'H'm! Ha!' suddenly exclaimed to the table in general: 'Bless my soul! Now, what do you think of this?' And then immediately to Isabel in particular: 'What do you think of this, Bell?'

'Well, what is it?' cried all.

'It's in "Our London Correspondence,"' said Suffield. 'Listen: "The unequivocal and brilliant success of 'The Backbiter' at the afternoon performance yesterday at the Variety Theatre has compelled the management to disclose the name of the author. The audience insisted with stamping of feet and reiterated cries of 'Author! Name! Name! Author!' and the manager stepped before the curtain, and said that the author was not in the house, but he would give his name—'Alan Ainsworth'."—There!' said Suffield. 'What do you think of that?—Did you know his play was going to be produced yesterday, Bell?'

'No,' she answered; 'I did not. I did not even know it was finished.' She had an overwhelming sense of pain and desolation, as if this were the final cut that severed all connection betwixt herself and Ainsworth: he had not thought it worth his while to give her his confidence, even in this small matter. She had come down extremely doubtful what answer she should give to George: now she had no doubt whatever.

"The play," Suffield resumed, "will be placed at once in the evening bill of the theatre; and while the enterprising manager may be congratulated on having secured a piece that is certain to run for many days and to take a place in the repertory of the theatre, Mr Ainsworth is no less to be felicitated on having in all human probability won fortune as well as fame. Mr Ainsworth was known, though it may be but anonymously, as a brilliant member of the staff of this journal until less than a year ago, when he was invited to assume a responsible position on the metropolitan press. Mr Ainsworth has shown he can do admirable work; and his friends, of whom the present writer has the privilege of counting himself one, are confident he will go far."—There! cried Suffield, slapping the paper on the table. 'What do you think of that?'

'The hand is the hand of the London Correspondent,' thought Isabel vaguely to herself ; 'but the voice is the voice of Alexander.—He deserves his success,' said she aloud : 'he has worked hard for it.' She spoke quietly but frankly, and no one guessed there was the pain of separation at her heart.

'I always said,' observed Mr Suffield, 'that Alan would turn up trumps : though he might have let us know about his matinée. Let's spend a shilling—it's Christmas, you know—in congratulating him.'

'And he's going to make his fortune !' said Mrs Suffield meditatively, with her eye on Isabel. 'I have heard that a very successful dramatist makes in these days of high prices and "No fees" as much as Fifteen Thousand a year !'

'No, mother !' exclaimed Euphemia.

'That must be a *very* successful dramatist, indeed, my dear,' said Mr Suffield.

'What about this telegram of congratulation ? said George.

They discussed the wording of the telegram for some time ; for Mr Suffield—who had found a telegraph form and a pencil, which he meant to use himself—would hear of nothing but 'Many happy returns.—*Returns*, don't you see ? There's nothing a manager or a playwright values so much as *returns* and *many* of them.' It was at length conceded that the phrase upon which he had set his heart should stand, but that there be set in front of it this : 'We congratulate you on the production of your play.' That done, they all signed it, as if the handwriting could be transmitted, in manner following : 'GEORGE SUFFIELD ; JOAN SUFFIELD ; EUPHEMIA ; GEORGE.'

George paused, before handing it to Isabel, to count the words. Reckoning the address, there was only room for one word more to complete the shilling's-worth. 'There is only one more word wanted,' said he : 'you had better sign "ISABEL."—That will do very well,' he added with a smile ; 'it will look like a Suffield manifesto.'

Isabel did not like it ; but she wrote as was suggested, saying to herself, 'What does it matter ?'

After breakfast, she went into the garden with Euphemia, and sauntered up and down among the flower-beds, as we saw her at the beginning of this story ; but the beds were now bare and waste as her heart. There George soon found them ; and seeing him coming, Phemy found an excuse for leaving her, and she prepared for what she knew was coming.

'Do you remember ?' he said. 'It was last Whitsuntide that I saw you and Phemy here ; it was in the beginning of the day that I spoke to you of something. Do you remember it ?' he asked.

'Yes,' said she with self-possession ; 'I remember it.' She remembered, too, that on that occasion she had come upon Alan Ainsworth in the conservatory.

'I asked you a question then, Bell, and you put me off ; and then I begged that I might put it again in a year. It is less than a year ; but I have found a year too long to wait. Tell me, Bell, am I right in thinking that you *quite* understand why I have asked you to come here this Christmas ?'

'Quite,' she answered.

'Then,' said he, intensely moved, 'I may ask the question ?' He took her hand and paused ; the pause was not long, but it seemed long to Isabel.

'May I take the question as asked ?' said she, looking down and making arabesques with her toe on the gravel.

'Bell !' he murmured. 'Then—then you accept me ?'

'I do, George,' she answered. For an instant she looked him frankly in the face, and then dropped her eyes again.

'Oh, my dear !' he exclaimed, and folded her in his arms before she was aware.

To that she submitted ; but when he ventured to press closer and to seek to kiss her, a sudden dislike of his embrace seized her, and she put him away. 'Not now, George !' said she—'not now !' and fled into the house.

George might have thought there should have been more in the asking of a wife than he had found ; but if he did think so he did not show it. He went about exuding happiness. That he had come to the understanding he desired with Isabel was apparent ; yet it was formally made known to his parents. Suffield took Isabel aside to welcome her as his prospective daughter-in-law. 'I'm glad, my dear,' said he, pressing her hand ; 'it's what I've wished for. Though lately,' he added, 'I had got to think that it was going to be Ainsworth.'

It was a busy Christmas Day. They all went to church in the morning, and exchanged greetings and salutations of 'Merry Christmas ! Merry Christmas !' on this side and on that. They returned to find the post-bag just arrived : the post is always late on Christmas Day. The bag was crammed with Christmas cards and greetings addressed to every member of the family ; for the Suffields now had troops of friends. For Isabel there was but one ; yet even that she was surprised to receive, for she had told no one she was coming to Lancashire for Christmas. When she recognised the handwriting of the superscription, her heart beat ominously : it was Alan Ainsworth's. She opened it before them all, recklessly, for they all were occupied with their own communications. Her envelope contained a letter as well as a card of greeting. She read the letter eagerly, greedily. 'I owe you,' it ran, 'and my good friends with whom your servant has told me you are staying' (He had called, then !), 'an apology for the business of this afternoon. It seems rude and ungrateful, perhaps, but my only reason for not confiding to you the secret of the production was that I was afraid the play might fail. That was why I also suppressed my name. I don't think I could have looked any of you in the face again if you had known, and all the world had known, that it had failed. I know you will all rejoice with me that it has not failed, and that there seems the prospect of a long run before it. There are seats ready for you as soon as you are ready to accept them. Are you returning to town soon ? I wish to see you to explain matters.'

When Isabel read that aloud—except the final sentence—to the family, George was silent and frowned a little, though no exception could be taken to anything he had heard read.

'We're going back to London on the last day of the year,' said Mrs Suffield: 'we have several engagements to fulfil. Will that suit you, Bell?'

'Oh, quite,' answered Bell.

The rest of that eventful day was crammed with gaiety and feasting. A good many guests came to dinner, and after dinner there was merry dancing; and so the time passed without thought. It was not till she had retired to her room very late that Isabel had leisure to consider what she had done and who she was. She was the affianced wife of her cousin George! She had promised to marry him!—to tie her life to his! She did not shudder at the thought of him; she was only dully miserable. This seemed to her a very poor conclusion to have reached. She was like a religious enthusiast who, after having had visions of heavenly glory, dreams of a divine presence and expectations of fulfilled prayer, suddenly finds himself shut in with a mere reality of earth, which causes him to doubt all he had formerly believed, and to despair of all he had formerly hoped for. When she had lived her simple, tedious, untrammeled life of schoolmistress, what thrills of joy were hers, what dreams of happiness! It was only now she recognised how much she must have dreamed, when she knew she was tied to a reality which was the fulfilment of nothing she had ever dreamed of or had longed for. Oh, what romantic visions she had had of heaven and earth filled with delight!—of Love that with its light and warmth would blend all the varied experiences of life into one Joy!—of 'Love the gift, and Love the debt!' Now all that was done with; the whole world was become gray and dull, and shrunken to a wretched round of going out and coming in, eating and drinking, sleeping and waking! And she herself, in her folly and blindness, had wilfully chosen this result! No one but herself was to blame! Why had she been so precipitate? Alan Ainsworth promised explanations! Perhaps she had mis-understood him!

'Oh, my love! my love!' she moaned in her anguish, pressing her hands to her eyes as she paced up and down her room. 'What have I done? What have I done?'

Yet George seemed satisfied and happy. He was not to blame; and how could she take his happiness from him? She knew, now that she had been put to the touch, that she did not love him at all, as a woman ought to love a man with whom she means to identify her life; but that was not because he was unworthy of her love. She now saw, too, that in committing outrage on herself she was doing wrong to George, who by her was prevented from knowing the unreserved, romantic love of another woman! Yet George was happy in loving her and in believing she loved him.

Next morning she went down to breakfast, resolved to show no sadness or regret: it would be the merest selfishness to trouble others with her vain feelings. It was remarked that she looked pale and had dark circles under her dark eyes; but she declared it was nothing: she had not slept well, she said, and her head ached.

The day was filled with engagements: a mid-day dinner in the school-room to the work-people, and a tea afterwards to the children, and last of

all, a family visit to the theatre. But yet there were intervals for private conference, of which George assiduously tried to avail himself. He sought to enjoy the accepted lover's privilege of sitting close to and embracing his mistress; but these endeavours Isabel did her utmost to defeat. And George was not offended; for he set her conduct down merely to the coyness usual in a maiden. Isabel made one or two faint efforts to shake his belief in her.

'Are you quite sure,' she asked once, 'that I am quite the woman you ought to marry?'

'Look here, Bell,' said he; 'don't ask such absurd questions: they are not suited to my intelligence. I have not known a great many women; but I don't need to know any more to be able to tell that the woman I have chosen is the one woman in the world for me.'

After that, what could she say that would not be simply a repudiation of her promise to him?

At the same time she was troubled with the necessity of sending Alan Ainsworth an answer to his question: When would she be at home? Should she write to him that she was engaged to marry her cousin, and she had better communicate with him no more? But would not that be attributing an intimate importance to the situation which he might fail to understand? She ended by sending him a line merely: 'I shall be home on the last evening of the year.'

(To be continued.)

CORNISH TIN-MINES.

TIN is decidedly the most interesting of the mineral treasures of Cornwall. Even in the days when recorded history was not, the Cornish tin was in some rude fashion mined and rendered usable for the purposes of man. The trade so carefully fostered by the Phoenicians was developed during Roman times, only to be neglected when the Saxons and Danes struggled for the mastery of England. It was revived in later centuries.

The earliest tin-mining was of the type known as 'streaming,' and was of course conducted at or near to the surface. The streams of tin were parcels of the ore that at some remote period had been detached from a lode and swept down-hill, most probably by alluvial denudation. Carew, in his 'Survey of Cornwall' (published in 1602), quaintly considered the denuding force that originally laid bare the surface tin deposits to be 'Noah's flood.' The primitive streaming operations were carried on with rude implements of stone or bronze, pickaxes of deer-horn, and subsequently, wooden shovels. With improved tools the miners were enabled to carry their quest farther into the earth; and shafts and tunnels were excavated, and mining for tin gradually developed until its present condition was attained. Much of the Cornish tin, especially before the beginning of the present century, found its way to London; and an important factor in determining the price of the article was the element of risk involved in the long voyage necessary to place it on the London market. The tin-merchant knew how to take advantage of these risks; and when non-occurrent, to invent imaginary ones to take their place. Rigging the market was an operation quite as well understood three

centuries ago as now, for—to quote once more from Richard Carew—‘About the price there groweth much adoe betweene the marchants and the owners before they can junpe to an agreement. The merchant unfoldeth his packe of strange newes, which either he brought with him from London (where most of them dwell) or forged by the way, telling what great likelyhood there is of warres, what danger of pirates at sea, how much of the fore-bought tynne lieth on their hands, &c. The owner, on the other side, stoppeth his eares against these charmes, answeres his newes with the Spaniard’s “*Credo en Dios*,” encounters his reasons with the present scarcitie and charges of getting and working tynne, and so keeping up the price.’ Carew then goes on to observe very shrewdly that ‘in the end, after much bidding and bowing, varying and delaying, commonly that merchant who hath most money to bestow and that owner who hath most tynne to sell doe make the price.’

Enterprise at the present day is rather devoted to developing the tin mines already in existence than sinking new ones. The miner or tinner of bygone days was a tin-finder as well. Even at the present there is ample opportunity for the exercise of the tin-finding faculty in tracing the direction of the veins of metal under the surface and ascertaining the best position for shafts—arts which tend to secure the maximum of ore with a minimum of labour.

Science has done much in assisting the metal-seekers in their arduous tasks; but still there is no golden rule to simplify the tin-seeker’s work. They say : ‘Where it is, there it is,’ and again : ‘By cutting the ground the metal is found’—both pieces of tin-lore that practical experience has over and over again proved by demonstration to be true. Occasionally, it happens that a lode has been discovered by accidental means. The wearing of the high-roads has more than once revealed the evidences of a rich deposit of tin beneath. The run of a lode has sometimes been discovered by the want or weakness of the grass along a particular section of a field. These instances, however, are but the exceptions to the general rule that tin-mining calls forth the best energies and intelligence of the seeker after subterranean wealth. It is the play for these two qualities that tin-mining affords which has done so much to develop the Cornish miner. In addition, he possesses resourcefulness and independence in a very marked degree. He is no mere underground labourer, as many miners admittedly are; he often works for his own hand, his remuneration being largely dependent upon the success that follows his intelligence and energy in exploiting a new venture. All over the world the Cornish tinman is in request as a miner; and during the Australian gold-fever, many of the steady persevering gold-diggers who amassed considerable wealth had received their training in English tin-mines.

The hardships and difficulties of a Cornish miner’s life are of the greatest. When it is borne in mind that in some of the mines there are upwards of fifty or sixty miles of shafts and tunnels, and that often a miner’s work lies in narrow tunnellings remote from the shaft, it will be seen that his life is no easy one. In some cases the metal has to be followed through ser-

pentine or granite, in others it must be tracked through adhesive beds of slaty clay. The tunnels are small, the air none of the freshest, and the temperature considerably higher than at the surface. Active exertion in a hot atmosphere means copious perspiration; and the miner tries to guard against resulting risks by wearing underclothing of thick flannel. His outer apparel consists of a suit of coarse canvas, which, whatever may be its original colour, soon becomes stained a miry yellow. A strong hat, or rather helmet, to protect the head from falls from the roof, and also from incautious contact with the ceilings of the subterranean passages where the tin is sought, completes the attire. In the front of the hat is carried a candle; and the appearance that a miner presents as, thus equipped, with inclined head and bent shoulders, he tramps along the narrow tunnels, resembles nothing so much as Atlas supporting the universe; for the roof of the cavern seems in the uncertain light quite superincumbent upon his shoulders. A still more peculiar effect is produced by the voices of the miners when they are heard in some of the remoter recesses of the mine; the sounds echo and re-echo from the sides of the tunnel, and travel in reverberating measures to considerable distances, seeming to come from a company of gnomes engaged in their underground labours.

To the actual work of mining must be added in many cases the task of reaching that part of the mine where the tin is being worked. It is no exaggeration to state that some miners have spent week after week and month after month three hours per day upon ladders while journeying from the mouth of the shaft to the workings. Of course, where conditions admit, the men are hauled out of the mine either up a perpendicular shaft or along an inclined plane.

When a man has finished his shift below and is about to repair to his humble home on the surface, he speaks of it as ‘going to grass.’ His enjoyments are of the calm and philosophical order; he plunges into no excesses, but employs his leisure in recruiting his stock of health and energy, ready for the next descent to the scene of his labours.

That a good miner makes a good gardener is a remark that the Cornish tinman verifies to the full. He is not only fond of agricultural pursuits, but his little holdings are models of careful spade cultivation. They are as a rule rigorously fenced off from surrounding properties with a precision and completeness rather suggestive of a mining claim than the mere delimitation of a few fields and gardens.

With all his sterling qualities and temperate habits, the Cornish miner is far from being long-lived. A former vicar of St Just, a typical mining district, was once heard to say that he had seen many widows, but not a single widower. The reason is not far to seek. It is not accident, but disease, that makes such terrible inroads in the ranks of the miners. He may slip from the wearying ladder, it is true; a block of rock may fall from the ceiling of the tunnel; or the blasting charge may explode prematurely with fatal results; water, too, may burst into the mine and drown the poor workers like rats in a hole. But though these influences may slay their thousands, diseases born of exposure, first to the heat and

dampness of the mine, and then it may be to the keenness of the outer winter air, undoubtedly may count their victims by the tens of thousands.

One of the most interesting features of mining in Cornwall is the pumping-engine. These triumphs of engineering skill are absolutely essential to the very existence of the mines. The mean annual rainfall for the county of Cornwall is about fifty inches, so that the amount of water that penetrates into the mines must be considerable. In some instances the Cornish engines pump water from depths of two thousand feet; and in one case at least the water that is thus raised to the surface comes from recesses in the earth two thousand five hundred feet from the surface. In the case of mines such as Botallack, where the workings extend beneath the sea, there is the percolation from the sea-bed to guard against. This the miners are unconcerned about, as, when they observe a thin stream come oozing through the roof or sides of their tunnel, they calmly daub in clay with the view of checking the leakage into the mine. A visitor to this mine observed a wooden plug in the ceiling of the tunnel through which the guide was conducting him, and being of a curious turn of mind, he inquired as to its use. When told that the purpose it served was to keep out the sea, he came to the conclusion that he had no desire for further subterranean exploration, and asked his conductor to take him back to the surface forthwith.

Sunday is the great day of the miner's week. He may, during the remaining six days, merit the comparison to a grub, toiling and burrowing in the earth; but on Sunday he removes from him the signs of his toil, dresses himself in sober black, and in company with his wife, spends the day soberly and religiously.

Of the Cornish mines it is perhaps truer than of other English mining districts, that 'A poor surface gives a rich soil.' This is especially applicable to the successful mines. In their vicinity the country has a most dreary aspect. The moorland with its huge blocks of moorstone or granite, and its wealth of heath and gorse, is there strewn with unsightly waste-heaps—small mountains of refuse, which show to what an extent the underground operations have been extended. Piles of mud and pits of slime, too, add to the dreariness of the scene; while the tall chimneys of the pumping, winding, stamping, or smelting works do much to detract from the romance that is generally associated with the county of Cornwall. One sighs for the 'meadows studded with herd and fold,' which are not wanting even in the midst of many of our colliery districts. Among collieries, however, there is little useless material brought to the surface. In the case of the Cornish mines, the tin forms only a small percentage of the roughly-broken rocks which the great 'kibbles' or barrels bring to the surface; hence the barren waste-heaps, the mud, and the slime.

Some of these waste-heaps, though, are barren no longer; they are covered with verdure, not, however, by the hand of man, but by the bounty of nature. These ancient indications of past mining activity go back, some of them, to Roman times; and some bear unmistakable evidence of

having been turned over more than once; for in several instances the rubbish-heaps of early days, when only surface-mining was practised, have been found to cover a rich store of metal deposited in the ground beneath. One feature of abandoned works that is even more striking and impressive than the shapeless heaps of ruin that mark the site of the former surface-buildings, is the occurrence of the deep black pools, most of them, according to local tradition, bottomless, and having in the centre of their bed the shaft leading to tunnels that never again will resound to the click of the miner's pick or the thundering of his mighty sledge. Many of these abandoned workings still bear evidence of their past success or failure. The miners of bygone days used to bequeath their experience to those who came after them by planting the banks adjacent to a prosperous mine with sprigs of elder; while an unsuccessful venture was commonly indicated by blackthorn.

No article dealing with the Cornish tin-mines would be complete without some allusion to the Stannaries or Stannary Courts (*L. stannum, tin*), which in former times exercised almost absolute power over the whole business of tin-getting. By ancient charters, the Cornish tinners were exempt from all other jurisdiction than that of the Stannary Courts save in cases of 'land, life, and limb.' An officer was appointed by the Duke of Cornwall, and was called the Lord Warden of the Stannaries. When he thought it necessary, he could summon the twenty-four stannaries of Cornwall to the Stannary Parliament, there to revise old and make new laws relative to tin matters. The last of these parliaments met in 1752; and after that date there was practically no business done in the Stannary Courts. Taxes on tin had been paid to the Dukes or Earls of Cornwall for many centuries. The smelted blocks were carried to certain towns to be coined—that is, stamped with the Duchy seal before they could be sold; and heavy fines were imposed upon persons who attempted to evade the stamping dues. In 1838, however, these were abolished, and the last relic of the old Stannary Courts disappeared, a compensation being awarded to the Duchy in place of the revenue formerly derived from tin.

Many are the crises through which the English tin-trade has passed. Leaving out those which are matter of very ancient history, we find great distress in Cornwall in the year 1727. The scarcity of corn reduced the tinmen to desperate straits. Sir John St Aubyn came forward and generously advanced money to keep them from starving and 'plundering their neighbours.' The last-named reason for Sir John's kindness is clearly indicative of the sturdy resourcefulness that characterised the miners of the early part of the eighteenth century. By 1730, the tin-mines were again flourishing. In 1744, however, another serious danger threatened the industry. England was then at war with France, and the small trading-vessels that carried the tin from Cornwall to London would of course form an easy prey to the French. At this crisis, St Aubyn again came to the assistance of the tinners, and obtained from the Admiralty adequate convoy for the tin-laden vessels.

About twenty years ago a far more serious danger than temporary famine or seizure of tin

cargoes by foreign foes was that which threatened to make English tin-mining altogether unprofitable. Much tin had been discovered in the East, in the neighbourhood of the Straits Settlements, and this sent down the value of the English article to an almost ruinous price. Many of the mines ceased working. The miners sought fresh fields of labour in foreign lands, and the prophets of ill averred that in a few years the British tin-trade would cease to have any save an historical importance. In 1870 and 1871 the price of tin was much inflated. Then came the importation of Australian and Straits tin, and prices dropped, and continued to drop, to the great distress of the miners and shareholders.

The history of the Wheal Owles Mine during this crisis is most interesting. The Wheal Owles is one of the St Just group of mines, and was the scene of the recent lamentable flooding, when so many brave men lost their lives. When the crisis came, the managing director or 'purser' resolved that he would not sell 'black tin' at a less price than sixty pounds per ton. Black tin is the metal that has undergone the stamping and the washing process to separate it from some of its rocky impurities. It has also had other matter burnt out of it, and is ready for the smelter's hands. The mine was then in the hands of a few well-to-do 'adventurers,' who could afford to try the experiment. Accordingly, no tin was sold, and it was stored in great quantities in hutes. A wealthy banking and smelting firm advanced the necessary money for carrying on the mine on the security of the stored black tin. This policy was commenced in 1875; and in 1878 the price of pure tin had fallen to sixty pounds per ton, and the crude article to forty pounds. The debt at the bank was £24,000, and the interest of course considerable. Still the 'purser' held on, and no tin was disposed of; and in 1881 and 1882 the reward came. The market went up, and the shareholders were enabled to realise far higher prices than the minimum below which they had resolved not to sell.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

WHEN the sense of stupefaction passed away, Upcraft became aware of a figure bending over the railing at the foot of his bed and peering inquisitively into his face. 'It's *you*, is it?' said the figure.

If he had needed any confirmation as to whose step he had heard or as to what manner of man stood there, he had gained it now. As the man spoke, he raised his shaggy eyebrows, feigning, as it seemed to Upcraft, the utmost surprise. He was enveloped in a thick gray dressing-gown. The light from the fire flickered upon it, and upon the old and cunning face of Mr Bryce.

At this moment Jess opened her eyes; she looked in bewilderment round the room.

'So this is the man you're nursing, is it?' said her father. 'It's just as well that I took it into my head to have a look at you, eh?'

Jess made no answer; but she kept a watchful look on his face.

Mr Bryce rose from his leaning posture at the foot of the bed and crossed over to the fire, where he stood very much in the attitude in which Jess had seen him in the library a few hours ago. He stretched out his hands to warm them while glancing at Upcraft over his shoulder. 'Now listen to me,' said he, with a crafty look out of the corner of his eye, 'for I'm going to speak plainly! Let me advise you to weigh every word before you answer me. Shall I go on?'

'Go on,' said Upcraft; 'I'm listening.'

'In the first place,' said Mr Bryce, 'I'll ask you a question. Do you still realise that you are a convict at large? Answer me that!'

There came a look of anger into Upcraft's eyes: Jess felt the hand she had given him pressed convulsively; but he made no answer.

'It's fortunate,' Mr Bryce went on, with a nod of satisfaction, 'that no one here—at Thurrock Hall—knows anything about you. You are Miss Jessie's patient—that's all. Your identity is known to no one, except us three who are here together.'

Upcraft looked into Jessie's face. 'Is that true?'

Jess answered: 'Colonel Woodward knows who you are; no one else knows.'

Mr Bryce cast a meaning glance at his daughter. Then he said: 'Now, listen to what I have to propose.' He walked across the room and back again thoughtfully; then he resumed his attitude over the fire and looked with evident mistrust at Upcraft.

'Well?' said Upcraft, impatient at his hesitation; 'you have something to propose, you say. What is it?'

'I was only wondering,' and there was still mistrust in Mr Bryce's manner, 'whether, as a medical man, it would not be wiser to put off my talk for a few days. I don't want to alarm you,' said he; 'but you've a feverish look in your eye which I don't quite like.'

'You are too considerate,' said Upcraft, in a tone of irony.

'Not at all,' said Mr Bryce.

'Then say what you have to say,' said Upcraft; 'now or never.'

'Very well,' was Mr Bryce's reply. 'You have had your warning. I'll only advise you, as a professional man, not to let anything I may say cause you undue excitement. The matter is a very simple one. You very naturally desire, under existing circumstances, to keep your presence here unknown—unsuspected.'

'I did not say so,' said Upcraft.

'Tut,' said Mr Bryce, with a wave of the hand. 'It's understood, then—it's understood.'

Upcraft offered no comment. He clasped his hands behind his head and looked fixedly at Mr Bryce. Jess stood at the bedside between the two, frequently looking from one face to the other.

'When I reminded you, rather bluntly just now,' Mr Bryce resumed, 'that you were a convict at large—an outlaw—I had a distinct motive for doing so. I wanted you clearly to understand your position. One word from Colonel Woodward, or from me, would send you back to the prison from which you escaped three years ago.'

An odd smile passed over Upcraft's face at

these words. But Jess looked with abject dread at her father.

'But you won't give him up, will you?' said she. 'You won't betray him now?'

'Why, no—no,' said Mr Bryce in his most plausible tone—not if he agrees to my conditions.'

'Conditions?' said Upcraft, closing his eyes for a moment, as if the better to comprehend. 'What may they be?'

'Simply that you give up all thought of holding my daughter to her engagement: that you lose no time, when restored to health, in making arrangements to quit the country for once and all: that you give your promise, in a word—having been provided with money to live abroad—never to show your face again!'

'And if I refuse?' said Upcraft, opening his eyes and looking searchingly at Mr Bryce.

'Those are my conditions.—If you refuse?' Mr Bryce resumed, 'I shall report you at headquarters; and before a week is out, you will find the handcuffs on your wrists again, and a prison van waiting for you without!'

Upcraft could control himself no longer. 'You coward!' said he, leaping up from his pillows as if he had some thought of springing at Mr Bryce's throat. 'By what right do you presume to dictate terms to me? Your step along the footway through the wood still rings in my ear. Look to your own wrists! For I may yet be tempted, if goaded much further, to put Woodward on the track of the man who tried to murder me in Thurrock Wood!'

At this fierce and unexpected retort, Mr Bryce was completely dumfounded, but only for a moment. He quickly recovered himself, and turning to Jess with a hypocritical air of concern, inquired: 'Does he often rave like this?'

Jess looked thoroughly amazed. If there was any reason in Upcraft's utterance—if it were not a mere feverish outburst of meaningless passion—her father was the direct cause of this grave calamity. As the words sank into Jessie's heart, their truth became clearly manifest; and they seized upon her imagination with irresistible force; and the whole scene of the attempted crime passed before her eyes. Her father had quitted the cottage soon after Upcraft's departure. He had crossed the fields, and had taken the footway through the wood to Great Thurrock Station. There he had seen Upcraft, followed him, and struck him down. She looked at Upcraft as if for some further confirmation. But he had fallen back upon his pillows, and lay there so pale and motionless that Jess became seriously alarmed.

Mr Bryce stepped forward and more closely scrutinised Upcraft's face. 'Out of danger, eh? I don't know so much about that! He's still delirious. Why, my dear,' said he, 'why didn't you give me a hint? You heard me warn him, didn't you? He's in a high fever. I should give him a cooling draught at once.—Good-night!'

Having uttered these words in a soothing, professional tone, while bending over the patient, Mr Bryce went out, treading softly down the passage, as if unconsciously trying to disguise the sound of his own footprint.

Towards nightfall on the following day, while Woodward was alone in the library, a visitor was

announced. He was a dark man with a closely shaven face; and there was a sporting cut to his dress which added to his general appearance of wide-awakeness.

Woodward received him with the eager question: 'Any news?'

The man nodded. He was a detective whom Woodward was employing to search into the matter of the attempted murder of John Upcraft.

'Is Mr Bryce here?'

'No,' said Woodward.

'At home?'

'Yes; he went home this morning.'

'I've business with him.—My dogcart is outside,' said the man. 'Will you drive over with me? I'm on the track at last.'

'Can Mr Bryce help you?' said Woodward, with surprise.

'Nobody better!' said the detective.

Woodward took his seat in the dogcart at the detective's side, and they flew along over the melting snow in the growing dusk of evening.

Mr Bryce, who sat in his easy-chair, grasped the arms vigorously as the two men were shown in. He looked startled. There was a wine-glass and an empty bottle of port on the table at his side; and the effects of the wine were apparent in his flushed face and thick utterance.

'Woodward?' said he. 'And who's your friend?'

'Sharp,' said the man, 'from Scotland Yard. I've a warrant, Mr Bryce, for your arrest on suspicion of being concerned in that affair in Thurrock Wood. May I trouble you?'

Mr Bryce, still grasping the armchair, rose up and stood erect before his visitors. The detective stepped forward and held out a pair of handcuffs invitingly.

A stifled oath—a gasp for breath—and Mr Bryce, reeling forward, clutched at his own throat, as though wrestling with some demon, and then fell in a heap, face downward, in front of the hearth. They lifted him back into his chair. They looked at each other. After a pause, the detective said: 'There's no need for handcuffs here.'

For some days Upcraft's relapse caused grave anxiety; but he slowly regained strength; and, strangely enough, as Jess remarked, he never spoke one word to her that showed any distinct recollection of her father's midnight visit.

One bright spring day, Jess had wheeled Upcraft's chair to the open window. She was more a companion to him now than a nurse; and as the need of her as a nurse diminished, she became conscious of a growing change in John Upcraft which seriously perplexed her. He seemed to be drifting from her. 'I sha'n't trouble you much longer,' said he. 'I'm mending fast. In a few days I shall be well enough to quit Thurrock Hall.'

'Trouble, John? You are a trouble to no one.'

'Not even to Woodward?'

'No. It is ungenerous to think so,' said Jess. 'There is nobody more hospitable in the whole county!'

'You know best,' said Upcraft.

'John! How strange you are,' said Jess. 'What is in your thoughts?'

'I was thinking about myself, I'm afraid,' said he. 'What is to become of me? What have I to live for now?'

'I don't know,' said Jess archly, 'unless it's for me.'

'For you, Jess?' said Upcraft, with surprise. 'Aren't you going to marry Woodward?'

'I? You must be dreaming.'

Upcraft's face brightened. 'How could I have ever had a doubt? Why, Jess, this is the second time you have saved my life! If I had needed any proof—if in all these years you had ever given me the slightest cause to doubt you—your devotion to me during these terrible days, while I was lingering between life and death, should have convinced me that I had no right to think that your love was changed!'

The ice was broken. They were lovers once more. And now he told her what had passed between him and her father on that misty afternoon at the cottage in the marshlands, and how he had subsequently entered the bar-parlour at the 'Old Hulk,' where the gossips had coupled her name, as he thought, with Colonel Woodward's.

'It is possible,' said Jess; 'I have been much at the Hall. Miss Woodward is my friend. Her brother and I have been thrown together. I like him, and—and—'

And then she hesitated, and looked out upon the park, and thought of what had happened there in the snow-storm on that memorable afternoon. Then she related to Upcraft every detail of the scene.

They now spoke freely to each other of all that had happened during their three years of separation.

'After bidding you good-bye, Jess, on that dreadful night,' said Upcraft presently, 'I went abroad. After a number of adventures, of which I will tell you another time, I reached "Frisco." There I got work in a silver mine, and began to make money.'

'But why,' said Jess, 'why did you never write?'

'I feared my letters would be intercepted,' said Upcraft. 'I could not trust your father. I thought of coming home and seeing you, and returning to the States. But I never could make up my mind. But at last something happened which decided me.'

'What was that?'

'It happened at a grog-shop. Some men were gambling at dice. A quarrel arose. Words led to blows. A pistol-shot was heard, and one of the gamblers fell. I ran to lift him from the ground, and instantly recognised him. He was an old fellow-clerk in the London house. He was seriously wounded, and lived only a few days. Before he died, he wrote a confession, which was signed and duly attested. It was about that forgery: and it is now in the hands of my lawyer. It sets forth how some half-dozen drafts, which I had been accused of having forged, were forged by him. He had put one of them among my papers.'

'How cowardly!'

'Yes,' said Upcraft. 'When he heard of my escape from prison, the little courage he had utterly failed him. He was in mortal dread that I should make my appearance at the office

and boldly accuse him of the crime. He was conscience-stricken, and he lived in fear and trembling. At last he left England, and wandered from one country to another, and so came across the man he least desired to meet.'

'It was fated; wasn't it?'

For a while they were silent. Then Upcraft said: 'I was on my way to the Hall, after quitting the "Old Hulk"—resolved to visit Woodward, and do my utmost to induce him to give you up—when I met with that trouble in Thurrock Wood. You know the rest.'

Upcraft was re-established as head-clerk in the house from which he had been dismissed as a criminal more than three years before. Soon afterwards, Jessie became his wife.

Woodward travelled for a while. Then he came home, and settled down with his sister at Thurrock Hall. Jim, when big enough, was taken on as under-gardener; and Mrs Gilkes found a home at one of the park lodges. She never observed anything queer about her son, when the signal-gun went booming over the marshlands on any subsequent occasion; and so she came to conclude that Jim had 'grown out of it' at last.

THE BRITISH SOLDIER AND HIS CHAPLAIN.

IT is a matter for congratulation surely that the British nation, while it cares for the physical and material needs of its soldier-sons, does not forget that they have spiritual needs also: it credits them with something more than mere physical frames to be kept strong and in good fighting trim. 'Tommy Atkins' while he has a strong arm to strike for his country, has a heart also to feel and sympathise. He is a man, not a machine; and has necessities other than those which can be met by the daily food-rations. And so England, recognising these deeper needs of her brave lads—needs which may not be always apparent on the outside, but which are none the less real—has her 'Chaplains' Department' in connection with the army. And there are never wanting men who in this path of duty are proud to go forth under her standard, not to fight, unless, indeed, some stern necessity should arise—then they can—but rather to enhearten the men, and to keep them in touch with that higher duty which embraces and covers all the lesser but essential duties of their soldier-life. The men are none the less unshaken in discipline and plucky in fight because of their Sunday morning parade service, or the quiet word of comfort and friendly sympathy spoken in the hospital or the barrack-room; or the knowledge that should they die in the service, words of Christian prayer will be reverently spoken by their graveside, even though they be laid away to rest in some far-off land, or on the red field of strife itself.

Through many long years it was my happy lot to be engaged in this work at home and abroad, both in the piping times of peace and amid the more stirring episodes of the actual battlefield. I say advisedly it is a happy work, for no clergyman or minister need wish for a more grateful and responsive constituency among whom to toil

than the lads of the British army. They are often misunderstood ; sometimes, indeed—and I say it with shame and indignation—looked down upon and scorned ; but I testify—and so will many another who has lived among soldiers and *knows* them—that some of the grandest qualities which go to make a noble character in man I have seen exemplified over and over again in the British soldier. Take him all round, he is a better man than those of his own station in civil life. Perhaps he ought to be, because the army is a great school of discipline, where many a man who through sheer weakness of character would very probably drift into evil ways in civil life, just gets that stiffening and backing up which he needs to keep him straight, and ultimately to turn him into a very decent fellow. Whereas, if he be utterly and irretrievably bad, he is soon ignominiously kicked out of the army, as he would be from any other decent society.

With regard to the work of the chaplains, the military authorities recognise four 'religious parties' in the army—Church of England, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Wesleyan ; and every soldier when he enlists is required to declare his 'religious persuasion,' he being 'at full liberty to attend the worship of Almighty God according to the forms prescribed by his own religion.' There are about eighty commissioned chaplains belonging to the first three parties : the Wesleyans, while having their corps of chaplains, and serving both at home and in campaigns, preferring not to accept commissions. This somewhat militates against the efficiency of their earnest and otherwise fully recognised work in the army ; and it is perhaps regrettable that they do not choose to stand on the same platform as their co-workers. These commissioned chaplains are divided into four classes, according to their seniority, ranking respectively as Colonels, Lieutenant-colonels, Majors, and Captains ; and headed by a Chaplain General—at present Dr Edghill—who is at the War Office. The pay of a military chaplain is not great, ranging from 10s. to £1, 2s. 6d. a day ; and he retires on pension when he has completed twenty years' service ; except under special circumstances, when the term of service may be prolonged. He is not entitled to special fees for the performance of any duty whatever for officers and men, such as furnishing copies of certificates of baptism, marriage, or burial. His duties embrace the conduct of the parade and voluntary services in the garrison church on Sunday morning and evening respectively ; the regular visiting of the sick in hospital, and of the soldiers' families in the married quarters ; and the weekly religious instruction of the children and drummer-boys. These, however, are the barest lines of his duty. There are a thousand other ways by which, if a chaplain would do his work effectively, he must come into sympathetic touch with the men. No rules or regulations can make a chaplain really efficient if it be not born in him from the first. There are special instincts, intuitions, and natural powers which are essential, and which, if he have them not, he had better relinquish the work at once and for ever. I have known a chaplain who regarded the officers' mess as an unholy place, and its inmates as men to be avoided rather than

influenced ; and others who looked upon the men in the ranks as beneath any kindly notice beyond what bare duty demanded. Such men are failures, and worse. On the other hand, the chaplain who is brotherly and sympathetic in the hospital, who has a cheery word for the men when he looks in upon them in the barrack-room, and who comports himself as a manly Christian gentleman in the officers' mess, is the success. The poor sick lads look eagerly for his coming, the men in the rooms hail his presence, and the officers welcome and respect him. He it is to whom the men will tell the sad secrets which perhaps have long been locked up in their own breasts ; and oftentimes he is privileged to be the happy instrument of effecting a reconciliation between the runaway lad and the anxious parents, who probably know not the whereabouts of their wandering boy.

The soldier is very quick to detect the right man—the man who is his friend and well-wisher ; and for him he will do anything. But woe betide the one whose ministrations he resents ! There are many little ways in which he can show it without bringing himself within the reach of reprimand. The remarkable restlessness at parade service, the sudden and strange somnolence which invariably seizes the men in hospital when such a chaplain crosses the threshold, and the scantily attended voluntary service, are all indications of 'Tommy's' displeasure. Indeed, I heard of one acting-chaplain in a large garrison town who with remarkable discretion told his military congregation that soldiers were simply 'paid cut-throats and robbers.' The sergeants of the particular regiment quartered there met together, and sturdily refused ever to hear that man again ; and what is more, their commanding officer did not compel them to do so.

To a man of the right stamp, the work of a military chaplain is full of happiness and encouragement, delightful alike in its experiences and in its after-memories.

THE MONTH : SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHEN, sixty years ago, George Stephenson prophesied that his newly-invented iron horse would achieve a speed of a mile in three minutes, his words were regarded with incredulity. Possibly the great inventor himself would have been incredulous if he had been told that the locomotive engine would be gradually improved until the three minutes in which a mile could be covered would be reduced to thirty-two seconds. This marvellous speed was actually attained lately on the New York Central Railway, and for some distance a speed almost as great was maintained. One can hardly realise what such velocity means ; for it is faster travelling than anything short of a projectile from a gun that we are acquainted with ; faster than the 'wings of the wind,' or the flight of the swiftest bird. In every second of its progress along the rails, the American engine while maintaining the speed stated above covered a distance of one hundred and sixty-five

feet. It is very doubtful if a higher speed than this is possible, for the resistance of the air is a very important factor.

The lectures by Professor Dewar on the Atmosphere and Liquid Air, which have aroused so much interest at the Royal Institution, and are believed to be among the most remarkable ever delivered in that historic theatre, came to a conclusion with an experiment which has never before been performed—namely, the synthesis of air. Every schoolboy knows how to analyse the air in a rough and ready manner by burning the oxygen and leaving the nitrogen. Professor Dewar mixed together fluid nitrogen and fluid oxygen in the proportions necessary—about four to one—to constitute the air we breathe. When these lectures are published, they will be read with avidity by the scientific men of all countries.

Fish is notoriously the most perishable form of food, and the kind which for that reason is most unpalatable when not perfectly fresh. It therefore seems to be a marvellous achievement to deliver in London, in first-rate condition, a consignment of fish which is the produce of Australian waters. These fish were recently on view in the Victorian Court of the Imperial Institute; they are of a kind not met with in Britain, and were brought, together with a large quantity of fruit, by the screw steamer *Oceania* from Melbourne.

During the recent drought, an experiment was tried in South Lincolnshire which is worthy of imitation by those who are within reach of water. This was on the farm of Swineshead Abbey, which is intersected by one of the arterial fen drains. By aid of a powerful fire-engine, the water from this channel was pumped over the land in the form of fine spray at the rate of eighty tons per hour. The engine was fixed at a convenient centre, and flexible tubing several hundred feet in length carried the water from it over a large area. Many agriculturists visited the farm, and they pronounced the experiment a complete success. There are many farms situated near reservoirs, lakes, and rivers which, in times of drought, might be benefited at small expense in similar fashion.

A French paper publishes an interesting account of a new industry in Algeria which utilises the dwarf-palm of that country, a tree which hitherto has proved to be one of the chief obstacles to clearing the land, for it is profuse in its growth, has most tenacious and wide-spreading roots, and is most difficult of eradication. Various uses are now made of this tree, but the principal is the extraction of the fibres which are found in the leaves and stems. The industry is of twofold benefit to Algeria, for it clears the land of the obstructive tree, and employs a large amount of Arab labour at the numerous factories which have arisen during the past few years. The leaves are first of all plucked, then sorted by women and

children, and lastly combed in a rough form of carding-machine, the principal part of which is a rapidly revolving drum with nails fixed upon it. With this rough appliance a man is able to card upwards of one thousand pounds of leaves per day. The fibre is subsequently curled or twisted, and can then be used for stuffing chairs, couches, and other articles of furniture.

The French scientific journal, 'La Nature,' recently published an article, interesting more especially to military men, which gave details of the method of crossing rivers by means of leathern bottles. The said bottles are made by utilising the hides of cattle which have been necessarily slaughtered to feed the soldiers; and in order to turn them to account the animals must be skinned in such a way as to leave the hide as whole as possible. The holes representing the places of the legs and neck are then tied up, and the skin, blown full of air, possesses sufficient buoyancy to support two men in the water. In practice these huge air-bottles are fastened below wooden rafts, which can be rapidly put together or taken to pieces.

Among the many methods of utilising waste products may be mentioned the employment of sawdust in making building-bricks. The sawdust must be dried, and all coarse particles and chips separated from it, after which it is mixed in the following proportions: Two bushels of sawdust, one of cement, and five of sharp sand. When these ingredients have been well mixed in a dry state, two bushels of slaked lime are added, and the whole incorporated and pressed into moulds. The product is said to be satisfactory and cheap.

A curious result of issuing coin of much less intrinsic value than the sum which it represents has occurred in the United States, where for some time the dollar has only contained sixty cents-worth of silver. Some astute counterfeiters have made a quantity of dollars containing the same amount of silver as those issued by the Mint, and from the latter they cannot possibly be distinguished. The question thus arises whether a Government which issues coins of a fictitious value can prosecute individuals for doing precisely the same thing.

In a paper recently read by Mr John Ritchie of Edinburgh, before the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, on the 'Utilisation of Water for Power,' the most modern appliances for obtaining power from water were fully described, including those more especially intended for electric lighting. The lecturer has carried out several installations of this character, in one case utilising a head of water of six hundred and fifty feet, and obtaining from it thirty-five horse-power by driving the whole of the water through a six-inch riveted steel pipe. In the course of his remarks, he pointed out what an enormous amount of power was at present running to waste, which might be applied to the benefit of landowners and manufacturers.

It is interesting to observe that both water and wind power are now receiving renewed attention at the hands of engineers. All over our country there are watermills and windmills which have been abandoned, and are going to decay. Artists know where to find them, and are the first to deplore the fact that improved methods of milling corn have rendered these picturesque places

obsolete. But, as we have just seen, water is once more being regarded as a valuable source of energy, but with the dynamo-machine yoked to it as a distributor. As to wind-power—improved windmills have a department all to themselves at the Columbian World's Fair, and although they are not quite so picturesque in appearance as their four-sailed prototypes, they are capable of much more effective work.

A new method of preventing forgery of bank-notes and other documents has been suggested by a German doctor. He states that certain colouring matters can be so prepared and combined, that when paper is dipped into the mixture each tint will penetrate the fibre at different speeds, the result being that the paper will assume a streaked appearance, each layer absorbing a different colour. The exact means by which this result can be brought about are not specified; but it is stated that the plan is practicable, and that it is impossible to imitate the effect produced without knowing precisely how the mixture of colours was made.

An interesting account of the way in which olive oil is produced in Sicily is given by the United States consul at Catania. The olive-tree grows equally well in the valleys and on the mountain sides; but those on the lower ground furnish an oil which is richer, and can be stored for a longer time without deterioration. The grinding and pressing of the olives are performed in a very primitive fashion. First, the olives are placed on a circular platform of masonry about seven feet in diameter, upon which a heavy mill-stone is turned by means of a pole to which a donkey is attached. While the stone revolves, a man is constantly engaged in turning the pulped olives over and over with a spade. In half an hour about one hundred kilogrammes will have been pulped in this way, when the mass is put in soft rush-baskets, which are piled in a heap in the press—an arrangement with a heavy wooden screw, which is worked by six men. About half the oil is expressed in this fashion, the rest being extracted by subsequent operations. The fresh oil is green in colour, and is placed in earthen jars for eight days to settle and clarify. It is then ready for use.

Tobacco has generally been regarded, and has been largely used, as an insecticide. It therefore comes as a surprise to learn from a recent issue of 'Indian Museum Notes' that there is at least one insect which thrives on the fragrant weed, and is so appreciative of a good cheroot as to render that delicacy useless for human consumption. This, 'the cheroot weevil,' or 'Lasioderma testaceum,' is a little beetle which lays its eggs on the leaf, the said eggs afterwards hatching out into white hairy grubs, which cut their way out of the cheroot, and leave tiny tunnels, which reveal their work and spoil the cigar. The greatest care is necessary in making the cheroots that the tobacco leaves should be free from contamination, for the proposal to subject them after manufacture to a heat of ninety degrees would, while destroying the eggs, spoil the flavour of the tobacco. The same insect will attack stored rice, opium, and other vegetable substances.

An effective method of closing bottles of milk air-tight is credited to a French inventor. The fastening consists of a disc of good india-rubber,

with a nipple or finger which fits the neck of the bottle, projecting from its centre. The bottle of milk is placed in a water-bath until it boils, when it is removed from the water, and the india-rubber stopper inserted. As the bottle cools, a partial vacuum is created inside the bottle, and the stopper is sucked into the neck, preventing all access of air. A metallic cover completes the operation.

Close by the North-western Railway line at Harrow may be seen a circular wooden platform about two hundred feet in diameter, standing upon which is an upright frame fitted with what seem to be Venetian blind slats. This is Mr H. Phillips's Flying Machine, the result of many years' careful experiments with a view to solve the problem of aerial navigation. Many flying machines have been designed with large plane surfaces to rise in the air on the kite principle. Mr Phillips has reduced these surfaces until they resemble, as we have said, the laths of a Venetian blind. The carriage, or frame, tethered to a central post, is driven around the track by a light but powerful steam-engine, which works an air-propeller. A high rate of speed has been attained, and the machine lifts at its rear end about three feet from the ground. The experiment is a promising one, for the machine does more than any of its predecessors; but as yet the problem of flying cannot be said to be solved.

Edison's phonograph has not yet been placed within reach of the public, although we occasionally hear of these instruments being sold at a somewhat extravagant price. It is stated by an American paper that the mixing of the composition for the waxen cylinders is a secret process only known to, and performed by one man.

Teachers of astronomy know well how difficult it is by diagrams or any other means to demonstrate to their pupils the movement of the earth and its satellite with respect to the sun, and they often have to content themselves with such homely appliances as an orange, a knitting-needle, and a candle. Mr J. B. Fisher, of North Parade, Deal, has earned the gratitude of instructors by designing a very beautiful contrivance, which he has named the Volvorb, which is small enough to stand at the end of a schoolroom table, and yet large enough for demonstration before a large class of pupils. The sun is represented by a gilt ball, which can, if desired, be replaced by a paraffin lamp; and the earth moves around it in such a way as to clearly illustrate the phenomena of the seasons with their varying lengths of day and night. Round the earth there moves, when required, a little satellite, by which can be shown the phases and eclipses of the moon. The contrivance works perfectly, and by very simple means, while the mechanism is of such originality as to justify the protection of a patent.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which is making inquiry into the state of our Sea Fisheries is gathering evidence of a very important and interesting nature. Professor Ray Lankester recommends that our coasts should be thoroughly surveyed, so that the movements and habits of the fish inhabiting them can be better studied; and he asserts that such a survey might be made to pay well from a commercial point of view, for new fishing-grounds would be discovered. He suggests that to carry out this work the

present Government grant to the Marine Biological Association, which amounts to only one thousand pounds per annum, should be trebled, and a further sum of six thousand pounds should be granted for a deep-sea vessel. Dr Günther is in favour of the establishment of hatcheries for the cultivation of sea-fish; and other witnesses have testified to the gradual depletion of the North Sea fisheries owing to the baneful practice of netting immature fish.

A member of the Government Indian Service in Arizona has recently published an account of the manner in which the Apaches prepare their arrow-poison, and he states that although there is no longer any need for the tribe to possess themselves of such warlike material, the process is gone through year after year as a matter of tribal tradition. The recipe for this poison would almost commend itself to the witches in 'Macbeth,' although it is somewhat simpler than the brew which they compounded. The Apache uses only three materials—namely, the heads of about a dozen rattlesnakes, a pint of poisonous red ants, and water. These he mixes together, and places in an earthen vessel, which he lutes with moist earth, previous to putting it into a fierce fire for twenty-four hours. At the end of this time the concoction assumes the appearance of a dark-brown paste, and is ready for smearing upon arrows. So deadly is the poison, that a prick with such a weapon will kill its victim in twenty minutes.

Once more an old scheme for making Paris into a seaport by means of a ship canal has been brought forward; and it is said that nearly half of the total cost, which is estimated at six millions sterling, has already been provided for. The suggestion is that the present water-way between Havre and Rouen should be extended to Paris, so as to enable sea-going vessels to come direct to the French capital. The total length of the water-way would be a hundred and fifteen miles, its depth about twenty-two feet, with an average width of a hundred and fourteen feet. The canal would require only four locks, and in other respects its construction would present no unusual difficulties.

The latest proposal for improved prison construction is that the cell-walls should be formed of thin steel pipes charged with water, so that the slightest puncture would reduce the pressure and cause an electric alarm to sound. Such a method of construction would, we think, be wholly unnecessary. Prisoners cannot escape from modern prisons of the ordinary pattern except with the connivance of their jailers. The days of Jack Sheppard are past.

A terror to dishonest milk-dealers has been contrived by Mr W. Belgrave of 482 Harrow Road, London. It consists of a glass jug holding one pint, with certain engraved lines upon its surface. In the first place it acts as a simple fluid measure, but its other duty is a more important one. Just below the line which marks the pint measurement, and also below that marking half a pint, there are three marks, the top one bearing the word 'Average,' the second one, 'Good,' and the lowest one, 'Very good.' These words are intended to denote the thickness of the layer of cream which will rise to the surface of the milk after a few hours' rest, and are of course

a direct test of quality. The quantity of cream in certain specimens of London milk which we have seen was so small that it would altogether defy measurement.

RUSSIAN RIDDLES.

To begin with, the Slavonic conundrum is not by any means a thing to be laughed at. No light and airy trifle, it entirely lacks the frivolity—some might say the futility—of the British specimen. Luckily for this generation, the tyranny of the English riddle is overpast. Familiarity with such a conversational kill-joy has long been reckoned the reverse of a social accomplishment. Looking, however, at the Russian variety, we at once discover that it is 'no fool,' to use an Americanism. The Muscovite quip is a stern and solid aboriginal fact. Racy of the soil, each riddle contains at least one buried myth and two mummified figures of speech. To unearth and revivify these dry bones requires the philosophic touch of a Max Müller or a Renan, tempered with the Shakespearean hilarity of a First Grave-digger.

Many of these enigmas or riddles are annually trotted out by the old crones as they gossip round the stove during the long Russian winter evenings. When the days of the Christmas festivities come round, the 'chestnut' is an unfailing source of joy. The riddle pure and simple bears a strong likeness in style to the famous riddle with which Samson defeated the thirty men of Timnath. It shows traces of a rude poetic instinct, and often, it must be added, is highly far-fetched. Ralston, in his 'Songs of the Russian People,' quotes a few that bear more immediately on his subject of folklore. Some of them are eminently calculated to tax the intellectual powers of the benighted peasant, were it not for the fact that the Russian peasantry have a special taste for figurative expression. Thus, such a phrase as 'The red cock has crowed' is the regular euphemism for the only too common village conflagration. 'To kill the worm,' in plain English, is to have a drink. Of course, such metaphors abound in the slang of all nations. They seem, at any rate, especially to flourish in the land which the rustic still shares with the house-demon and the Will-o'-the-wisp—where the mill-sprite and the water-nymphs have not yet resigned their dominion over the streams, nor lost their power to torment. As Byčinski wrote to Gogol, the Slavonic lower classes are still pagans at heart, with superstitions for religion; and their proverbs and enigmas bear eloquent testimony to the fact. In common with the powers of Nature, such humble domestic objects as the shovel, the broom, and the sieve enjoy the honour of personification, and almost attain to the rank of fetishes. Thus, the oven-fork is disguised in a riddle as an ox with a hayrick on his horns and with his tail in a woman's hands. Soaring into more poetic regions, we find that considerable demands are made upon our guessing powers. It needs some ingenuity to recognise the morning dew under the figure of a maiden's keys, disregarded by the moon, but picked up by the sun. Another popular enigma runs thus: 'A white ox has

restored the world, which a black cow has overthrown.' This is, perhaps, not the most obvious way possible of saying that day succeeds night. The statement that 'There are letters on blue satin which neither learned nor unlearned can read,' is only a periphrastic allusion to the stars in the sky.

Many similar riddles were collected by the Russian ethnologist Khudyakov some thirty years ago. The present writer has jotted down in his note-book a few others derived from various sources. It will be noticed that most of the enigmas are put in the form of simple assertions, and are not, like the English riddles, interrogative. For instance, 'I went down the street, I came to two forked roads, and I walked along them both at the same time.' This apparent impossibility is solved every morning by the possessor of a pair of trousers. Compare the Mexican conundrum, 'What is it we enter by three ways and leave by one?' Answer, a shirt. The two following resemble each other: 'I am blind, but show others the way; deaf and dumb, but know how to count.' 'It has neither eyes nor ears, yet it leads the blind.' A milestone and a walking-stick are respectively implied. 'It flies silently and alights in silence; but when dead and rotten, it roars aloud.' 'People pray for me, and long for my coming; but directly I appear, they hide themselves.' The first is snow; the second, rain. Here is one which requires the commentator's farthing rushlight: 'There is a little dog which turns round and then lies still. It neither barks nor bites, but it keeps you out of the house.' The answer is, a lock. 'A nine-legged bird, which faces the wind and flaps its wings, but cannot fly.' 'It lives without body, speaks without tongue; none ever saw, but all have heard me.' In other words, a windmill and an echo. In the latter connection, we are reminded of the Zulu 'sense-riddle,' quoted by Tylor, 'There's a thing that travels fast without legs or wings, and no cliff or river or wall can stop it'—that is, the voice. The following is calculated to puzzle even a sphinx: 'What walks on its head and on foot, and with boots on, yet barefoot, all at the same time?' The solution is, the hobnail in your boot.

Some common objects of the household and the farmyard are thus presented: 'I have four legs and feathers, but am neither beast nor bird.' 'There are four brothers under one hat.' 'If I eat grass, my teeth grow blunt; chewing stone, they grow sharp again.' 'Black, but no crow; horned, but not a bull; with six legs, but no hoofs—what am I?' 'Four brothers run side by side, but never catch one another up.' 'I was born twice over, but not christened—a famous singer, yet over my corpse they chant no dirge.' 'A barrel of wine without staves or bottom.' 'I am not bird or beast, but sharp-nosed, thin, and shrill-voiced; killing me, you shed your own blood.' 'What walks upside down overhead?' The equivalents, taken in order, are as follows: A bed, the legs of a table, a sickle, a beetle, the wheels of a cart, a cock, an egg, a gnat, and a fly. Two miscellaneous queries may be added: 'Who are the two brothers that live on opposite sides of the road, yet never see each other?' 'What can't be caught, though you can see it close?' Your eyes and shadow, respectively.

Besides these somewhat tough and indigestible chestnuts, which serve as strong meat for senile wits obfuscated by 'vodka,' there is a more milk-and-water pabulum for the less robust intellect of the junior population. Such are the catches of an arithmetical kind. They are cosmopolitan and transparent; for example: 'A pack of wolves ran by; one was shot—how many remained?' 'If one man finds one kopeck, how much will three find there?' 'A peasant bought four scythes for four roubles; what will each come to?' 'There sat three cats, and each had two others opposite her; how many were there altogether?' The answers, I need hardly state, are, One, nothing, the ground, and three cats. Again: 'A flock of birds settled on a clump of trees: if they had perched in pairs, there would be one tree empty; if singly, there would be one tree too few—how many birds and how many trees?' A moment's consideration of this very elementary simultaneous equation will show that there are four birds and three trees. 'There was a party made up of a brother and sister, a man and his wife, and two brothers-in-law; how many were there in all?' Answer, three. Lastly, and to conclude a 'decrecendo' of bathos: 'Why does the dog bark and the cow lie down?' Because he can't talk, and she can't sit.

There only remains to add, that in Pskov and in other parts of Russia it is a peasant's custom not to allow the bridegroom to enter upon his honeymoon until he has answered correctly all the riddles propounded by the bride's companions. His lady-love would not be kept long in suspense, if the 'vivâ-voce' examination involves no more baffling ordeal than that contained in the last few questions I have adduced.

TO THE SEA.

WHY art thou grieving evermore, O Sea?
Lo, through the long night-watches, I, awake,
Have heard thee cry. Hast thou a heart to break,
A human heart to suffer just as we?
What is the trouble that unceasingly
Maketh thy cry go up? Is it for sake
Of the dark secrets that the rivers take
From the great cities, bearing them to thee?
White faces thou hast rocked upon thy breast
With crooning song, like mother's lullaby;
And thou hast bound with sea-weed many a tress
Of hair most golden in its loveliness:
Ah, should it seem a marvel unto me
That thou shouldst grieve and grieve, and know not
rest?

MARY FURLONG.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
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